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ABSTRACT

Because the field of popular music has produced rich resources of social commentary on women, it offers ample instructional materials for the critical examination of women's life styles in a pluralistic society. Additionally, by adding a "voice" to the traditional classroom content, this medium arouses student enthusiasm and interest which many written resources may have failed to tap. The objectives of such an approach aim at defining the identity and self image of females while enhancing the understanding of male students, emphasizing the need to promote change in both thought and action, and pursuing a realistically balanced view of the feminist position. Suggested thematic approaches, including both female and male images, and some examples of accompanying songs include: (1) negative self image ("When Will I Be Loved," "Nowhere Man"), (2) positive self image ("I Am Woman," "I Got A Name"), (3) independence and mutual respect ("Different Drum," "I've Got To Be Me"), (4) submissive individuals ("Angel Of The Morning," "I'm Your Puppet"), (5) dominant individuals ("Honky Tonk Woman," "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown"), and (6) rebels and outcasts ("Witchy Woman," "Born To Be Wild"). The document concludes with lists of 26 songbook resources for lyrics and 59 resources for teaching women's studies in general. (KC)

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"WOMEN'S STUDIES AND POPULAR MUSIC:
USING AUDIO RESOURCES IN SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION"

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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> Women are not present in the curriculum. They're either totally absent, as in history or science, or they appear in a destructive or only half-true form, as in literature. Women's Studies has made people aware of women's exclusion from the curriculum, and aware that course content is male-baised.... Men as well as women need... to perceive women as whole people, not as nasty, foolish, or sexy objects. They need to see women as complex human beings.
>
> From the Bulletin of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (1954)

Demeaning stereotypes of women--ranging from sexist images of brainless but buxom playthings to soap opera views of bath-robed, scatter-brained housewives--have been the primary targets of the women's liberation movement. Feminist arguments continually focus on the abuses of television programs, motion pictures, and popular magazines in projecting women as passive objects rather than as active persons. Unfortunately, many teachers unwittingly contribute to the perpetuation of a variety of anti-feminist myths. Connie Brown and Jane Seitz have decried the effects of the lack of easily accessible instructional materials to promote a more balanced view of women's contribution to society by observing,

> The difficulty about learning about the history of women... is that, for the most part, it is an unwritten history of millions of private lives, whose voices, those that were recorded at all, are scattered and buried in journals and letters....[Men's] ideas about women are accessible through the laws they passed and maintained, denying or restricting women's civil and property rights, through the religions they

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> organized and practiced, through their literature. Women did write novels, essays, poems, magazine articles, but most of these are long out of print, and the task of digging up those old sources is still ahead of us.[1]

The real challenge facing contemporary teachers who wish to alter the sexist slant of modern society rests in the re-forming traditional educational processes which have dulled the sensitivities of students to the various contributions of females in social and political life. Polemics aside, students should be encouraged to examine reflectively the full range of roles which women have occupied. Anne Firor Scott foresees the resolution of this dilemma in the field of history by noting,

> In some ideal world there would be no such thing as women's history since social historians would recognize that male and female make up society, create mores, pattern the culture; economic historians would be aware that women have always been part of the labour force and have contributed to economic choices; legal historians would know that case law and to some degree statute law have been shaped by the needs and demands of women; political historians would be aware of the people who organized the precints as well as the people who met at the summit.[2]

I think the classroom can become an active arena for exposing the monolithic stereotype of the submissive female, and that through the use of existing audio resources, students can be encouraged to examine the multiplicity of women's life styles in a pluralistic society. Since the field of popular music has produced rich resources of social commentary on women, it offers ample instructional materials for critical examination, many of which have been written and performed by women.[3]

Although books and articles by Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Elizabeth Janeway, Aileen S. Kraditor, Gerda Lerner, and Margaret Mead have stimulated thoughtful, creative scholarship in Women's Studies, their works have failed to spark similar innovative activities in the realm of instructional resources. One reason might be that the traditional process of assembling evidence on the female past has created a variety of unforeseen difficulties for classroom teachers. The tendency of teachers to rely more heavily upon written sources--newspaper articles and editorials, official records from state, provincial, and federal legislature, and books and essays by poets, journalists, politicians, and ministers--than any other resources has rendered women's history "speechless." In only a few instances have the rich oral testimonies of contemporary women been considered, let alone thoroughly investigated.[4] By neglecting the use of non-traditional oral resources, high school and college teachers have failed to tap the enthusiasm and interest which can be aroused by audio materials.

Black author James Baldwin has observed, "People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them."[5] This perceptive comment invites teachers to explore the extent to which their students have been "trapped" into a restricted view of women in society through the traditional content of classroom instruction. The most productive approach for adding a "voice" to the heretofore mute texts of Women's Studies would be to utilize lyrics from songs to illustrate the pluralistic images of male and female relationships. This can be accomplished by selecting a series of significant social themes for classroom study. Once identified, these themes will reveal the multiplicity of female images in contemporary society. The interplay of ideas within each thematic structure should encourage each member of the class--male and female--to develop a personal position on each issue.

All effective teaching approaches should be directed by clearly articulated objectives. No single set of goals has been generated to encompass the teaching of a well-defined view of women; however, I feel that the following list of ideas

underpin the ideology of the feminist position:

A. To examine the stereotypes and social myths which surround the images of women in contemporary society with the goal of presenting a more balanced view of the contributions of women.

B. To illustrate the professional activities and avocational pursuits which women have historically pursued and in which they currently participate.

C. To provide a variety of female models which can be used as focal points for student investigation and reflection.

D. To examine selections of the literature of the women's movement in its written and oral contexts.

E. To improve the self-image of female students while enhancing the understanding of male students concerning the historical circumstances of women.

These objectives aim at defining identity/self-image; they emphasize functional reality along with the necessity of promoting change in both thought and action; and they involve the pursuit of a realistic, balanced view.

Outlines of several proposed thematic approaches which might be used by teachers as stimuli for generating a more balanced view of the feminist position will be found at the end of this article along with a songbook list from which lyrics of many of the songs mentioned are available. This thematic structure may be expanded to illustrate specific points of interpersonal, social, political, or exonomic concern. For instance, the traditionally ambivalent male attitude toward the institution of marriage also exists in the female mind. This fact can be demonstrated dramatically to students by playing recordings by Linda Ronstadt and the Stone Poneys ("Different Drum"--Capitol 2004) and Carly Simon ("That's The Way I've Always Heard It Should Be"--Elektra 45724). One strength of this teaching approach is its flexibility. An instructor may approach a universally relevant concept such as "marriage" from a variety of perspectives based upon the specific recordings employed. Once such a theme has been identified, some members of

the class will inevitably attempt to outdo the teacher by assembling their own audio references. Thus, the original two-song illustration on the theme of marriage may be expanded through student suggestions to include "Worst That Could Happen" (Buddah 75) by The Brooklyn Bridge, "I'm Gonna Get Married" (ABC 10032) by Lloyd Price, "It's Too Soon To Know" (Argo 5402) by Etta James, and "Someone Saved My Life Tonight" (MCA 40421) by Elton John. Although this open-ended approach may initially disrupt pre-planned class presentations, the enthusiasm generated among the students will more than compensate for occasional problems created by expanding the time assigned for a specific topic.

Until formal scholarship and teaching practices related to Women's Studies are synthesized in the classroom, the "bucolic" canard that the "place" for women is at home, pregnant, barefoot, and mute[6] will not be vanquished. This essay suggests only one new instructional approach as a model for change. It is my opinion that without the introduction of such innovative classroom resources, many students will continue to be "trapped" in history. Below is an outline of the proposed thematic approach.

SUGGESTED THEMATIC APPROACHES

A. Negative Self-Image

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"Why do some persons believe that they are incapable of controlling their own lives?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

Discrimination	Paternalism	Alienation
Sexism	Stereotypes	Loneliness
Prejudice	Powerlessness	Drug Abuse

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"Born A Woman" (MGM 13501) by Sandy Posey	"Angel of Mercy" (Stax 0121) by Albert King
"Dreams of the Everyday Housewife" (Capitol 2224) by Glenn Campbell	"Hard-Time Losin' Man" (ABC 11405) by Jim Croce
"Down On Me" (Mainstream 662) by Big Brother and the Holding Company (Janis Joplin)	"Carpet Man" (Soul City 762) by The Fifth Dimension
"When Will I Be Loved" (Capitol 4050) by Linda Ronstadt	"Why I Sing the Blues" (Bluesway 61024) by B. B. King
"Half-Breed" (MCA 40102) by Cher	"(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" (London 9766) by The Rolling Stones
"Society's Child (Baby, I've Been Thinking)" (Verve Forecast 5027) by Janis Ian	"Born Under A Bad Sign" (Stax 217) by Albert King
"Eleanor Rigby" (Capitol 5715) by The Beatles	"Nowhere Man" (Capitol 5587) by The Beatles
"Mother's Little Helper" (London 902) by The Rolling Stones	"Eighteen" (Warner Brothers 7449) by Alice Cooper

B. Positive Self-Image

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"How do persons express attitudes of confidence and feelings that they are able to control their own destinies?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Considered:

Pride	Confidence	Opportunity
Cooperation	Individualism	Success

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"I'm A Woman" (Reprise 1319) by Maria Muldaur	"I Got A Name" (ABC 11389) by Jim Croce
"Mr. Big Stuff (Stax 0088) by Jean Knight	"My Way" (Reprise 0817) by Frank Sinatra
"Fancy" (Capitol 2675) by Bobbie Gentry	"A Natural Man" (MGM 14262) by Lou Rawls
"I Am Woman" (Capitol 3350) by Helen Reddy	"Dead End Street" (Capitol 5869) by Lou Rawls
"Brand New Key" (Neighborhood 4201) by Melanie	"I Am...I Said" (Uni 55278) by Neil Diamond
"These Boots Are Made For Walkin'" (Reprise 0532) by Nancy Sinatra	"Okie From Muskogee" (Capitol 2626) by Merle Haggard
"You're So Vain" (Elektra 45824) by Carly Simon	"Philadelphia Freedom" (MCA 40364) by Elton John
"Don't Rain On My Parade" (Columbia 33161) by Barbra Streisand	"Steamroller" (Warner Brothers 7144) by James Taylor

C. Submissive Individuals

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"Why do some persons feel compelled to submit to the demands of members of the opposite sex?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

Empathy	Submission	Love
Dependence	Selflessness	Fear

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"Angel of the Morning" (Bell 705) by Merilee Rush	"I'm Your Puppet" (Bell 648) by James and Bobby Purify
"Help Me Make It Through The Night" (Mega 615-0015) by Sammi Smith	"Hey Girl" (Colpix 692) by Freddie Scott
"Midnight Train To Georgia" (Buddah 383) by Gladys Knight and the Pips	"Carpet Man"(Soul City 762) by The Fifth Dimension
"Piece of My Heart" (Shout 221) by Erma Franklin	"I Only Have Eyes For You" (Columbia 10190) by Art Garfunkel
"Where You Lead" (Columbia 45414) by Barbra Streisand	"Baby What You Want Me To Do" (Vee Jay 333) by Jimmy Reed
"Oh Me Oh My (I'm A Fool For You Baby)" (Atlantic 2838) by Aretha Franklin	"When A Man Loves A Woman" (Atlantic 2326 by Percy Sledge
"You Keep Me Hangin' On" (Motown 1101) by The Supremes	"Nadine" (Chess 1883) by Chuck Berry
"Chain of Fools" (Atlantic 2464) by Aretha Franklin	"Under Your Spell Again" (Imperial 66144) by Johnny Rivers
"Son-of-A-Preacher Man" (Atlantic 2580) by Dusty Springfield	"Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours" (Tamla 54196) by Stevie Wonder

D. Dominant Individuals

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"How do some persons achieve positions of dominance over others?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

Domination	Chauvinism	Power
Fear	Courage	Physical Force

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"Lucretia MacEvil" (Columbia 45235) by Blood, Sweat, and Tears	"I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man" (Chess 1560) by Muddy Waters
"Polk Salad Annie" (Monument 1104) by Tony Joe White	"Seventh Son" (Imperial 66112) by Johnny Rivers
"Swamp Witch" (MGM 14496) by Jim Stafford	"Hard To Handle" (Atco 6592) by Otis Redding
"Lady Marmalade" (Epic 50048) by LaBelle	"Brown-Eyed Handsome Man" (Chess 1635) by Chuck Berry
"Mother-In-Law" (Minit 623) by Ernie K-Doe	"Bad, Bad Leroy Brown" (ABC 11359) by Jim Croce
"Man Or Mouse" (Duke 413) by Junior Parker	"Big Boss Man" (Vee Jay 380) by Jimmy Reed
"Star Baby" (RCA 0217) by The Guess Who	"Secret Agent Man" (Imperial 66159) by Johnny Rivers
"Don't Mess With Bill" (Tamla 54126) by The Marvelettes	"A Man and A Half" (Atlantic 2575) by Wilson Pickett
"Mustang Sally" (Atlantic 2365) by Wilson Pickett	"Goldfinger" (United Artists 790) by Shirley Bassey
"How Does That Grab You, Darlin'" (Reprise 0461) by Nancy Sinatra	"You Don't Mess Around With Jim" (ABC 11328) by Jim Croce
"Honky Tonk Woman" (London 910) by The Rolling Stones	"Mack The Knife" (Atco 6147) by Bobby Darin
	"Sixteen Tons" (Atlantic 3323) by Don Harrison Band

E. Independence And Mutual Respect

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"Can a person pursue individual goals and exercise independent judgment -- and still receive respect from others?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

Freedom	Ethics	Principles
Education	Cooperation	Individualism
	Morality	

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"Respect" (Atlantic 2403) by Aretha Franklin	"Respect" (Volt 128) by Otis Redding
"Don't Make Me Over" (Scepter 1239) by Dionne Warwick	"Ninety-Nine and A Half (Won't Do)" Atlantic 2334) by Wilson Pickett
"Different Drum" (Capitol 2004) by Stone Poneys (Linda Ronstadt)	"Satisfied Mind" (Philips 40400) by Bobby Hebb
"Think" (Atlantic 2528) by Aretha Franklin	"Express Yourself" (Warner Brothers 7417) by Charles Wright and the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band
"It's Your Thing" (T Neck 901) by the Isley Brothers	"I've Gotta Be Me" (Reprise 0779) by Sammy Davis, Jr.
"Don't Touch Me" (Capitol 2382) by Bettye Swann	"Stand!" (Epic 10450) by Sly and the Family Stone
	"Gentle On My Mind" (Capitol 5939) by Glenn Campbell

F. Rebels and Outcasts

Question for Reflective Consideration:

"What characteristics, actions, or ideas tend to earn a person the label of rebel in contemporary society?"

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

Prostitution	Aggression	Crime
Poverty	Rebel	Ostracism
		Hypocrisy

Songs and Performers:

Female Images	Male Images
"Harper Valley PTA" (Plantation 3) by Jeannie C. Riley	"Big Bad John" (Columbia 42175) by Jimmy Dean
"Devil With a Blue Dress On and Good Golly Miss Molly" (New Voice 817) by Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels	"Ramblin' Gamblin' Man" (Capitol 2297) by The Bob Seger System
"Suzanne" (Reprise 0615) by Noel Harrison	"Trouble Man" (Tamla 54218) by Marvin Gaye
"Evil Ways" (Columbia 45069) by Santana	"Outlaw Man" (Asylum 11025) by The Eagles
"Swamp Witch" (MGM 14496) by Jim Stafford	"Papa Was A Rollin' Stone" (Gordy 7121) by The Temptations
"Mississippi Queen" (Windfall 532) by Mountain	"I'm a Ramblin' Man" (RCA 10020) by Waylon Jennings
"Sweet Cream Ladies, Forward March" (Mala 12035) by The Box Tops	"Born To Be Wild" (Dunhill 4138) by Steppenwolf
"Witchy Woman" (Asylum 11008) by The Eagles	"Ramblin' Man" (Capricorn 0027) by Allman Brothers Band
"Mean Woman Blues" (Monument 824) by Roy Orbison	"Big Boy Pete" (Arvee 595) by The Olympics
"Night Owl" (Atlantic 2648) by Wilson Pickett	"The Snake" (Soul City 767) by Al Wilson

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FOOTNOTE PAGE

[1]"'You've Come A Long Way, Baby': Historical Perspectives," in Sisterhood Is Powerful: An Anthology of Writing From the Women's Liberation Movement, edited by Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 3.

[2]"Women in American Life," in The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture, edited by William H. Cartwright and Richard L. Watson, Jr., (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1973), p. 151.

[3]The list of successful contemporary female recording artists is impressive: Joni Mitchell, Mary Travers, Janis Joplin, Roberta Flack, Helen Reddy, Gladys Knight, Janis Ian, Dianna Ross, Linda Ronstadt, Phoebe Snow, Grace Slick, Donna Summer, Rita Collidge, Aretha Franklin, Dionne Warwick, Carole King, Bette Midler, Joan Baez, Carly Simon, Cher, Judy Collins, and others. A sample of recent books and articles which reflect the power of female performers in the popular music industry includes Katherine Orloff, Rock 'N Roll Lady. (Freeport, New York: Nash Publishing Corporation, 1974); Sandra Shevey, Ladies of Pop/Rock. (New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1971); William A. Sievert, "For Every Bob Dylan, A Joni Mitchell," The Chronicle of Higher Education, XI (January 12, 1976), p. 17; and Susan Peterson, "Music in Ladyland: Where the Charts Are," Billboard (February 25, 1978), pp. SW3,18.

[4]Limited attempts to pursue social analysis through song lyrics may be seen in selected autobiographical studies (Joan Baez, Daybreak. New York: Avon Books, 1969), in a few journalistic reviews (Robert Winder, "Carole King: 'You Can Get To Know Me Through My Music'," Stereo Review, XXX (April, 1976), pp. 64-67), and in infrequent sociological essays (Jerome L. Rodnitzky, "Songs of Sisterhood: The Music of Women's Liberation," Popular Music and Society, IV (1975), pp. 77-85 and William S. Fox and Michael H. Wince, "Feminist Attitudes and Preferences for A Feminist 'Message' Song: A Research Note," Popular Music and Society, IV (1975), pp. 156-169).

[5] Notes Of A Native Son. (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1964), p. 138.

[6]E. G. Campbell, "Women in U.S. History: Concepts and Organizing Structures," in Teaching About Women in the Social Studies: Concepts, Methods, and Materials, edited by Jean Dresden Grambs (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, Bulletin #48, 1976), p. 23.

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